



# Thank you to Denis Saunders for 30 years' service to *Pacific Conservation Biology*

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The title of this note may sound lame, especially in the light of the achievements I am about to describe, but something stronger such as ‘Tribute’ might be interpreted wrongly as meaning that Denis had died. In the interests of accuracy and a selfish desire to avoid clogging my email with anxious communications about his well-being, I have opted for being lame but correct – Denis is very much alive, but he is leaving the *Pacific Conservation Biology* editorial board. A change in editorial board membership may not seem worthy of a note in News and Views, but this case is special.

It was with sadness, but also a deep sense of gratitude, that in January this year I accepted the resignation of Dr. Denis Saunders, AM, from the editorial advisory board of *Pacific Conservation Biology*. Denis has been a member of the editorial board or, more recently, the editorial advisory board, since the journal’s first issue in 1993. Even before then, he was involved in the planning that ultimately led to the decision to launch the journal, working closely with Ivor Beatty OAM, the principal of the foundation publisher, Surrey Beatty and Sons, and foundation editor Dr Craig Moritz.

Although recent changes to journal processes in the interests of open science have shown some of the once hidden work behind the scenes of editing and publishing, much of Denis’ valuable contributions to *Pacific Conservation Biology* have not been in the limelight. They include reviewing, editing and editorial correspondence, planning discussions, informal conversations, and sage advice to colleagues on the board, authors and reviewers. This work has immeasurable ripple effects on the professional lives of the many colleagues who have interacted with him in his roles at *Pacific Conservation Biology*. I have personally benefitted from his experience many times, especially his advice in tricky editorial situations. At its foundation, *Pacific Conservation Biology* had an editor and 13 editorial board members, so there was no room for passengers and everyone pulled weight. I was not with the journal in those days, but I am sure that Denis’ experience, judgement, and strong work ethic would have been invaluable in such an environment.

Denis also contributed greatly to *Pacific Conservation Biology* as an author. According to the journal website, he has made 26 contributions to the journal, spanning 11 research papers, nine notes in News and Views, two editorials and four perspectives/forum essays. The research papers are a small subset of his work in cockatoo conservation, the need to integrate agriculture and biodiversity conservation, and bird community ecology. The News and Views contributions include not only items such as conference reports and updates from the days before routine online reporting, but respectful and timely tributes to colleagues who have passed away. The editorials and perspectives offer his insight and wisdom on a range of pressing questions in science, as well as sharing his experience in practical skills such as the craft of scientific communication.

I am sure that everyone joins me in thanking Denis for his enduring contributions to *Pacific Conservation Biology* and wishing him well in his on-going work in conservation biology. It is not a complete break, because he says that he is still willing to review and to offer counsel on curly editorial issues – those offers are much appreciated. Denis does, though, leave us with a challenge. He is disappointed with the length of time his papers spend in editorial handling, arguing that they should be processed far more quickly. Thank you, Denis – speed in handling, while not neglecting thoroughness in reviewing or editorial oversight, should be a priority for the editorial team.

**Data availability.** Data sharing is not applicable as no new data were generated or analysed during this study.

**Conflicts of interest.** The author declares that he is a long-standing professional colleague of Denis Saunders.

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